

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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Jersey City to Celebrate the Puerto Rican Heritage Festival and Parade as part of the City's 'Tapestry of Nations' Ethnic Festival

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy, the Municipal Council and the Division of Cultural Affairs proudly announce that the annual **Puerto Rican Heritage Festival**, a two day event being held as part of the City's '***Tapestry of Nations' Ethnic Festival***' series, will take place from **12 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.** on **Saturday and Sunday, August 16, 2008 and 17, 2008** at **J. Owen Grundy Pier** at Exchange Place.

The **Puerto Rican Parade** kicks off on Sunday, August 17 at 12 p.m. from Lincoln Park at Kennedy Boulevard and Belmont Avenue. It winds its way along Kennedy Boulevard to Montgomery Street and then along Montgomery Street to the reviewing stand at City Hall.

"The vibrancy and influence of the Puerto Rican community is an integral part of the fabric that makes up Jersey City's Tapestry of Nations," said **Mayor Healy**. "A large part of Jersey City's economy and culture is in based upon the core contributions of the Puerto Rican people. Their family values, faith, and hard work place the Puerto Rican community firmly within the narrative of all Jersey City immigration stories."

The **Honorable Senator Jorge Suárez Cáceres** is this year's Grand Marshall. Senator Suarez Cáceres was sworn in on August 31, 2006 as the Senator of the District of Humacao, Puerto Rico, after being elected on July 16, 2006. Prior to his election, Senator Suarez Cáceres worked as the Regional Director of the Department of the Housing in Humacao, from September of 2005.

This year, the **Puerto Rican Heritage Festival & Parade, Inc.** will be honoring the following people: International Godfather - Luis Jimenez, International Godmother - Ruth Vega, Local Godfather - Noel (Speedy) Mercado, Local Godmother - Roxie Medina, Man of the Year - John Melendez, Woman of the Year - Honorable Wilda Diaz, Police Officer of the Year - Angel Gonzalez, Teacher of the Year - Miriam Lebron, Sheriff Officer of the Year - Wilbert Negron, EMT of the Year - Litza De Jesus, Correction Officer of the Year - Samuel Moreno, Fireman of the Year - Nelson Estremeda, Student of the Year - Sidney Montanez, Student of the Year - Adrian Espada, Honorary Puerto Rican - Joe Napolitano, Jr., Pioneer Merchant of the Year - Ramon Delgado, Doctor of the Year - Dr. Nestor Sanchez, and Lawyer of the Year - Jose Ginarte.

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Considered the largest and most colorful ethnic parade in Jersey City, thousands are expected to march with thousands more as spectators. Bands in colorful costumes, stilt walkers, dancers, antique cars, floats and native bands will be in abundance. There will be continuous entertainment by local, Island and international artists. Exotic food, refreshments, arts and crafts, handmade objects des arts and other novelty items will be available for sale.

For more information about the Puerto Rican Parade and Festival, call the Division of Cultural Affairs at (201) 547-6921.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.///